

REMARKS

The present amendment is submitted in response to the Office Action entered on October 19, 2007. A three month petition for extension of time is submitted herewith. Claims 1-17 were pending. Claims 1, 2, 9 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,481,440 issued to Oldham (Oldham) in combination with U.S. Pat. No. 5,982,969 issued to Sugiyama (Sugiyama). Claims 3-6 and 11-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of Oldham, Sugiyama and U.S. Pat. No. 2,374,408 issued to Braidwood (Braidwood). Claim 17 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of Oldham, Sugiyama and U.S. Pat. No. 5,938,324 issued to Salmon et al. (Salmon). Claims 7 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious in view of Oldham, Sugiyama and U.S. Pat. No. 4,310,974 issued to Gdovin et al. (Gdovin). Claims 1, 7 and 9 are hereby amended. Claims 2 and 10 are hereby cancelled without prejudice. Reexamination and reconsideration in view of the presently amended claims and the arguments submitted below is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 9 and 10 were rejected as obvious in view of Oldham and Sugiyama. Of these, claims 1 and 9 are independent. Claims 1 and 9 are hereby amended to include some recitations from claims 2 and 10, respectively. Claims 2 and 10 are hereby cancelled without prejudice.

More specifically, amended claims 1 and 9 recite “an insertion hole formed through said panel by performing burring for said panel from the front surface side thereof to the rear surface side, said insertion hole being surrounded by a burring portion formed by said burring, the burring portion providing an increased contact area of the insertion hole, a rounded edge being formed between the front surface of said panel and said burring portion.” These amendments find support throughout the Specification and drawings. See, for example, element 32 of Figs. 1 and 5, element 33 of Fig 4, element 34 of Fig. 6, page 5, lines 22-26, page 9, line 27 through page 10 line 7, etc.

The Examiner states that he did not give any patentable weight to the burring recitations of claims 2 and 10 because they were product by process recitations. Applicant respectfully contends that regardless whether or not these are product by process recitations, at least certain portions of these recitations must be given patentable weight. More specifically the above recitations explicitly recite structure such as: “said insertion hole being surrounded by a burring portion formed by said burring, the burring portion providing an increased contact area of the insertion hole”¹ and “a rounded edge being formed between the front surface of said panel and said burring portion.”² It is respectfully submitted that the above are recitations of structure and not process and must therefore be given patentable weight.

Furthermore, even if the entire recitations are considered, for the sake of argument, to be product by process recitations, they must still be given patentable weight with reference to a structure implied by the process. “The structure implied by the process steps should be considered when assessing the patentability of product-by-process claims over the prior art” (MPEP §2113). Again, the structure implied by the process of burring includes “a burring portion formed by said burring, the burring portion providing an increased contact area of the insertion hole.”

It is respectfully submitted that neither Oldham nor Sugiyama disclose “a burring portion formed by said burring, the burring portion providing an increased contact area of the insertion hole” as recited by claims 1 and 9. For example, Fig. 3 of Oldham shows a panel clearly lacking a burring portion. (Compare, for example, the panel of Fig. 3 of Oldham with panel 3 of Fig. 1 of the present application.) Sugiyama does not even disclose a panel which includes insertion holes; therefore, it cannot possibly disclose burring portions associated with the insertion holes.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 1 and 9 are patentable in view of the cited art.

¹ See element 32 of Fig. 1, page 9, line 27 through page 10 line 7 for a description of an exemplary burring portion.

² See, e.g., Fig. 1 showing a rounded edge formed between the burring portion 32 and the panel 3.

Claims 3-6 and 11-16 were rejected as obvious in view of Oldham, Sugiyama and Braidwood. Claims 3-6, 11-16 depend upon claims 1 and 9. Claims 1 and 9 are patentable in view of Oldham and Sugiyama for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, claims 3-6 and 11-16 are also patentable in view of these references. Furthermore, Braidwood does not cure the deficiencies of Oldham and Sugiyama with respect to claims 1 and 9. More specifically, Braidwood does not disclose a burring portion. Instead, the light guide of Braidwood is held in place by the use of various frame members and the like (see, e.g., members 14, 18 of Fig. 3). Therefore, claims 3-6 and 11-16 are patentable in view of Oldham Sugiyama and Braidwood.

Claim 17 was rejected as obvious in view of Oldham, Sugiyama and Salmon. Claim 17 depends upon claim 9. Claim 9 is patentable in view of Oldham and Sugiyama for the reasons discussed above. Therefore, claim 17 is also patentable in view of these references. Furthermore, Salmon does not cure the deficiencies of Oldham and Sugiyama with respect to claim 9. It is respectfully submitted that Salmon does not disclose a burring portion or “a rounded edge ... formed between the front surface of said panel and said burring portion.” It is respectfully submitted that the upturned portion of bezel 64 which includes gripping components 66a and 66b is not a burring portion, because a person of skill in the art would recognize that this portion could not have been formed by burring (it is, for example, too long in relation to the diameter of the opening to be thus formed and does not have rounded edges).

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claim 9 is patentable in view of Oldham Sugiyama and Salmon. Consequently, claim 17, which depends upon claim 9, is also patentable in view of these references.

Claims 7 and 8 were rejected as obvious in view Oldham, Sugiyama and Gdovin. Of these, claim 7 is independent and claim 8 depends from claim 7. Claim 7 is amended to recite that the first step includes “performing burring from the front surface side thereof to the rear surface side as said insertion hole having a contact area increased by the performance of the burring.” It is noted that claim 7 is a method claim. Therefore, the “burring” recitations of claim 7 are not product by process recitations.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Oldham, Sugiyama nor Gdovin disclose performing burring. Therefore, claim 7 is patentable in view of the cited art. Claim 8 is patentable because it depends from patentable claim 7.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

If, for any reason, the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, Applicant requests that the Examiner contact the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles telephone number (213) 892-5790 to discuss any steps necessary to place the application in condition for allowance.

In the event the U.S. Patent and Trademark office determines that an extension and/or other relief is required, applicant petitions for any required relief including extensions of time and authorizes the Commissioner to charge the cost of such petitions and/or other fees due in connection with the filing of this document to Deposit Account No. 03-1952 referencing docket No. 393032040900. However, the Commissioner is not authorized to charge the cost of the issue fee to the Deposit Account.

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Respectfully submitted,

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